DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 240 796 EC 161 869

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TITLE Generalized Compliance Training: A Direct Instruction Program for Managing Severe Behavior Problems.
PUB DATE 4 Nov 83
NOTE 23p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association for the Severely Handicapped (10th, San Francisco, CA, November 3-5, 1983).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Behavior Modification; *Severe Disabilities; Teaching Methods
IDENTIFIERS *Generalized Compliance Training

ABSTRACT

Five case studies illustrate the use of generalized compliance training with students who have severe behavior problems. Based on extinction and generalization processes, the approach consists of five phases: (1) assessment to determine the nature and severity of noncompliance; (2)initial instruction demonstrating the consequences of compliance and noncompliance; (3) provision to permit responses to major and minor noncompliances; (4) use of a precorrection before the learner engages in activities that prompt noncompliance; and (5) final training involving instructional sets and targeting of less obvious inappropriate behaviors. Procedural safeguards that should be in place prior to program implementation are outlined. Case studies depect the effectiveness of generalized compliance training with multiply hadicapped, disturbed, profoundly retarded, and autistic students. The program produced changes relatively quickly and durably. (CL)

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G E N E R A L I Z E D C O M P L I A N C E T R A I N I N G

A Direct Instruction Program for Managing Severe Behavior Problems

ED240796

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San Francisco, California November 4, 1983

EC161869

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Generalized Compliance Training: A Direct Instruction Program for Managing Severe Behavior Problems.

ABSTRACT:

Generalized Compliance Training is a technology developed to bring serious behavior-disordered persons under control. The technology incorporates traditional behavior management techniques with direct instruction teaching principles. The procedures have been implemented effectively with severely handicapped students who have had a long history of serious behavior (non-compliance, self-abuse, aggression, tantrums, vomiting, breaking, tearing, running away, etc.). Collected data demonstrate the range of application of the procedures: age (preschool to adults); serious behaviors; settings (school, home, group homes). In addition collected data show maintenance and generalization of the behavior changes.

INTRODUCTION

Generalized Compliance Training is a direct instruction program designed for managing serious behavior problems. The program is not appropriate for students whose behavior problems can be remediated through attention to the details of good instruction (content, schedule, pacing, motivation, etc.) and implementation of basic classroom management techniques. The procedures are designed for students whose serious behavior (noncompliance, spitting, aggression, running away, self-abuse, severe tantrums, etc.) has been resistant to good instructional techniques and basic behavior management procedures.

This paper presents an overview of the training program, details of procedural safeguards, four case studies, a brief discussion of maintenance and maintenance data on two case studies. The details of the training program are fully presented in the training manual (Engelmann & Colvin, 1983).

BASIC COMPONENTS OF THE PROGRAM: EXTINCTION AND GENERALIZATION

The details of the Generalized Compliance Training procedures are based on two learning processes: extinction and generalization.

The extinction process assumes persistent behavior is learned. A child becomes noncompliant when he or she consistently experiences that certain resisting behaviors such as aggression are effective in removing commands or tasks. Another child may learn that some inappropriate behaviors such as self-abuse or tantrumming are very effective in securing attention. In general, the noncompliant behavior serves the learner by allowing the learner to control the environment. The first step is to provide unambiguous demonstrations to the student that these behaviors will no longer be effective. The learner will be taught a new relationship: compliance leads to positive consequences and noncompliance leads to negative consequences.

The second process underlying the procedures is generalization. The student needs to learn that the fundamental relationship (compliance has positive consequences and that noncompliance has negative consequences) applies to all legitimate contexts (persons, places, times and tasks). The procedural steps in teaching a generalization are

a) identify the full range of examples.

b) select examples that sample the range of variation (teaching set).

c) use the sameness rule to sequence the teaching examples: "Juxtapose examples that are greatly different and treat each example the same way." (Engelmann & Colvin, 1983).

d) precede difficult tasks with easy tasks (juxtaposition prompting).

e) test with untrained examples to identify errors of stipulation and/or misgeneralization.

GENERALIZED COMPLIANCE TRAINING PHASES

The generalized compliance training program consists of five phases, summarized in Table 1.

Phase 1 is an assessment to determine both the nature and the severity of the learner's noncompliance. During this assessment the learner demonstrates (through behaviors) the types of problems that must be addressed by the compliance training.

Phase 2 is the initial teaching phase. During this phase, the two basic sets of training tasks are introduced: the noncompliance set and the compliance set. Phase 2 teaches the learner the basic relationship between consequences that follow compliance and those that follow noncompliance. The noncompliance set is introduced first, followed by the assessment of tasks that are considered for the compliance set and by the establishment of the compliance set. Phase 2 expands the compliance set and establishes voice control over the learner so that the learner responds to a warning voice in the same way the learner responds to noncompliance consequences.

In phase 3 the noncompliance set is modified to permit responses to both major noncompliances and minor noncompliances.

In phase 4, the compliance set is used as precorrection before the learner engages in activities that prompt noncompliance. Phase 4 also uses the noncompliance set, the compliance set, and voice control to change obvious inappropriate behaviors not targeted before phase 4.

Phase 5 is the final training phase. During phase 5, the noncompliance set, the precorrection set, and the voice control are maintained, and instructional sets are established. Also, the less obvious, inappropriate behaviors (such as inappropriate unsupervised play behavior) are targeted.

The sets established in the different phases of the training are cumulative. The later phases in the program simply modify and expand what was presented in earlier phases. The cumulative feature of the program is designed to meet the ongoing need for maintenance and practice of skills taught earlier. A runner does not learn to run five miles and then stop running after achieving this goal. So long as the runner wishes to perform in running events, the runner must continue to train. So it is with noncompliance. The program should not be viewed as a quick intervention. Rather, it is an organic structure that changes as the learner changes. For some learners, however, phase 5 may have to be maintained for years--for as long as the learner is expected to perform in "training" situations.

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

Since the program initially may cause the learner some stress, may require hands-on procedures and may be subject to misinterpretation, a number of procedural safeguards need to be in place before the program is implemented. The person implementing the program should take the following steps:

1. Obtain parental or guardian consent, based on complete understanding of the tasks and contingencies scheduled for the learner.

2. Ensure staff and parents understand that the program may need to continue for years in the case of severe behavior problems.

3. Obtain complete disclosure and consent from the school district for implementation and maintenance of the program, especially subsequent placement of the student.

4. Ensure that a school official or qualified personnel provides independent confirmation of the learner's noncompliance assessment and documentation that "good teaching" techniques have been used and have failed.

5. Ensure that all staff, including bus aides, who will work with the student, are properly trained prior to their involvement. Obtain an agreement from the school district that this training will occur in both present and future placements. Inform parents that respite care providers need to be trained in the procedures.

6. Designate a trained professional to monitor the program, on a frequent and unpredictable schedule to

   a) ensure all program elements are in place

   b) maintain staff and parent behavior, and

   c) provide support to parents and staff.

7. Inform the building principal and staff so that they have a general understanding of the program.

8. Obtain a commitment from teachers and parents to teach the student once the problem behavior is under control. Inform teachers and parents that the precision and intensity of instruction required to teach the newly compliant learner is very demanding and that if the student is not learning then regression may occur.

9. Terminate the program immediately if the learner does not show substantial improvement the first day for something is seriously wrong.

10. Ensure that a trained consultant is readily available if the procedures are relatively new to the trainer.

11. Ensure that additional classroom staff are available if warranted.

12. Determine if an extended school year (summer program) is likely to be needed.

TABLE 1. TRAINING PHASES FOR GENERALIZED COMPLIANCE

Phase	Assessment	Noncompliance set	Voice control	Compliance set	Target
1	Initial				
2	Complete	Establish	Establish	Establish	Extinguishing noncompliance and establishing compliance
3	↓	Use to consequate minor and major noncompliances	Use to prevent noncompliance	Expand	Promoting generalization of compliance
4	↓	↓	↓	Use for precorrection	Extinguishing obvious inappropriate behaviors
5	↓	↓	↓	Dejuxtapose tasks of compliance set Establish instructional sets	Extinguishing less-obvious inappropriate behaviors

CASE STUDIES

The following case studies are reprinted, with permission, from the text Generalized Compliance Training (Engelmann & Colvin, 1983).

Case Study 1

This subject is a 15-year-old male whose primary diagnosis is deaf rubella syndrome and right congenital cataract. According to his parents, he was a happy child until he began his schooling. At his third school placement (a residential facility for deaf students), his behavior had reached a severe, persistent level. His repertoire included hitting his nose until it bled, scratching his arm until it bled, screaming, ripping his clothes, and vomiting. He was declared out of control and was placed in a TMR public school-based program in 1980.

In this setting, he exhibited his former tantrum behavior (screaming, ripping his clothes, hitting his nose, scratching his arm, and vomiting). The average frequency of the tantrums was 4.5 per week, with an average duration of one hour.

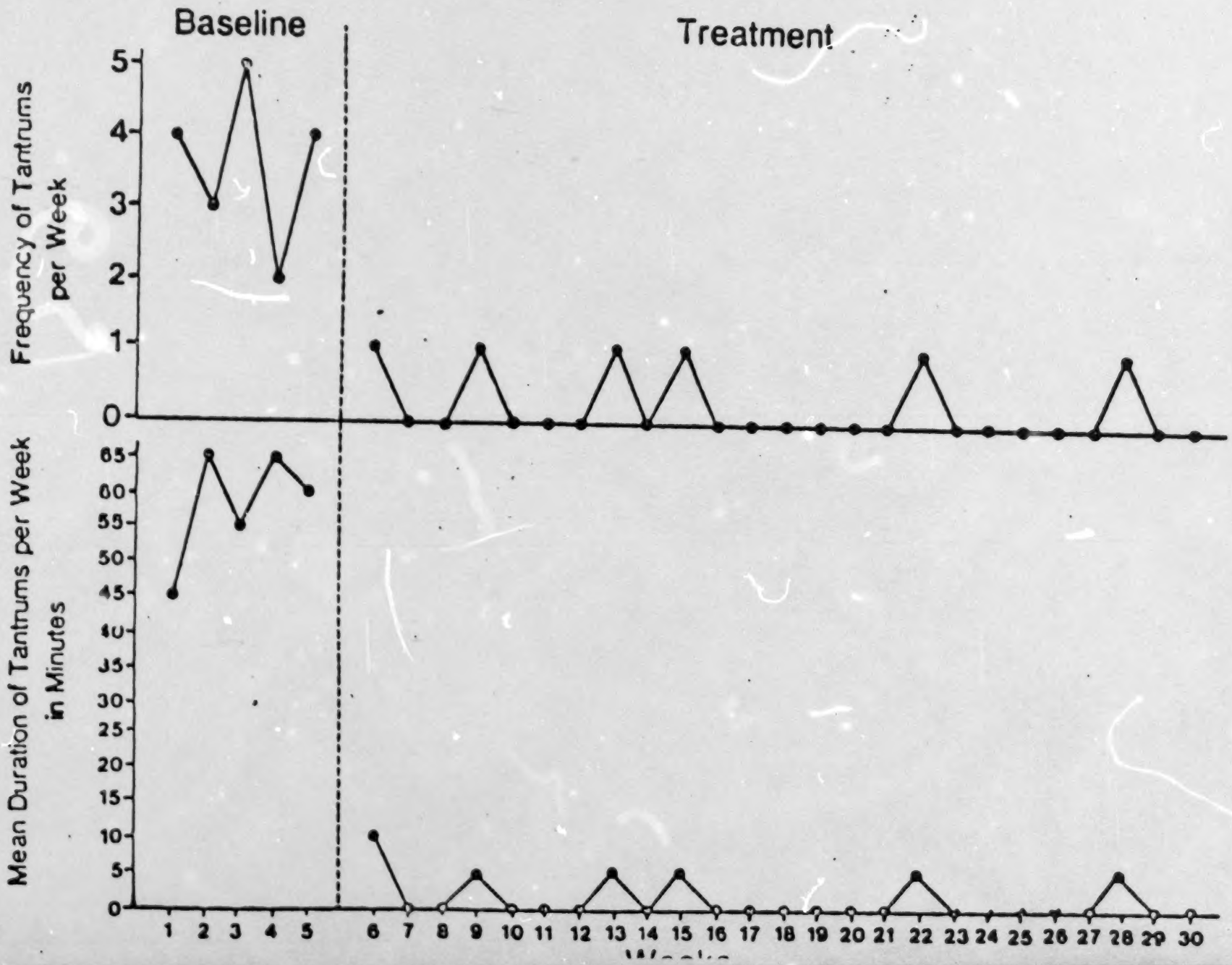
The compliance program was introduced on September 23, 1980. The time required to establish the noncompliance and compliance sets was one and one-half hours. The subsequent frequency and duration of the tantrumming averaged one tantrum every three to four weeks with an average duration of five minutes for the remainder of the term. For the remainder of the school year, his tantrums occurred once every six weeks with an average duration of two minutes.

Case Study 2

This subject is an 11-year-old male diagnosed as hyperactive, autistic, psychotic, and schizophrenic. The primary problem was breaking and tearing behaviors. He had no toys because he consistently broke them; he had not worn pajamas to bed for five years because he would tear them; he had no furniture or pictures in his bedroom as he would tear them; he had torn pieces off the fence, ripped out electrical wiring under his home, torn out bathroom fittings and the back of the TV. The breaking and tearing behavior occurred when he was unsupervised. The parents tied him to his bed with a belt and rope following bouts of breaking and tearing.

The data show the number of torn or broken items at home and at school. The mean number of items damaged per day was 5.1 (2.8 at home and 2.3 at school). This number reduced to virtually zero at each site after compliance training had been introduced. The data also show that the reduction in breaking and tearing did not occur at school until the program had been introduced (i.e., generalization did not occur at school as a function of the program being implemented effectively at the home by the parents).

Case Study 1



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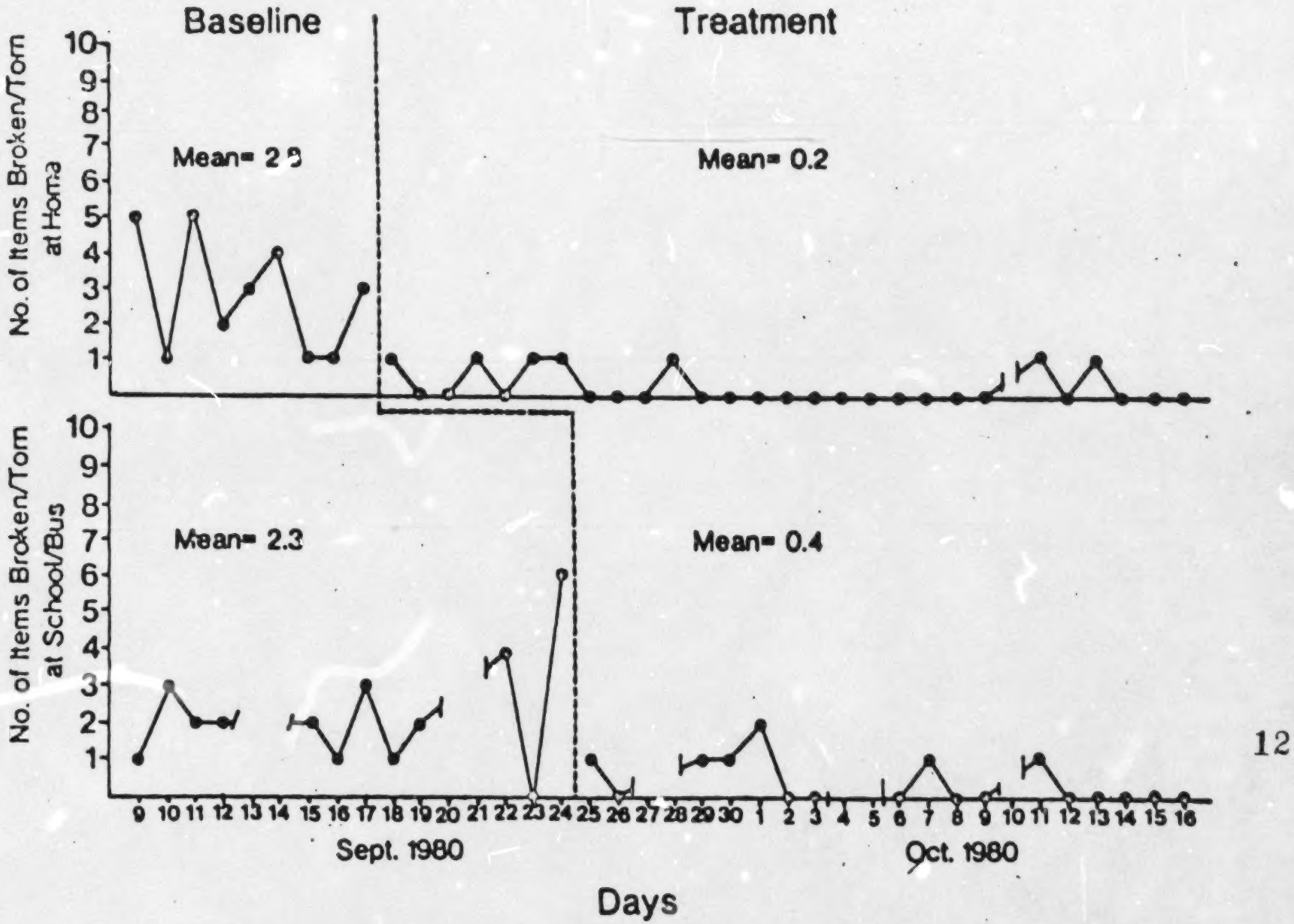
Case study 2


Baseline
Treatment
Mean= 2.3
Mean= 0.2
No. of Items Broken/Torn at Home
Mean= 2.3
Mean= 0.4
No. of Items Broken/Torn at School/Bus
9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
Sept. 1980
Oct. 1980
Days

11

12

Case Study 3

Subject is a profoundly retarded, severe epileptic 16-year-old male. In the past three years, he has had three different school placements and is curretnly out of the school system. He has been excluded from the school system because of severe aggressive, non-compliant behavior. In the context of a demand situation, the subject would typically resist by biting, hitting, or pinching the teacher. He frequently would throw himself on the floor and attack anyone who tried to force him to stand or resume the previous position.

At the close of the 1980-81 school year, the classroom teacher (senior high school TMR class) presented data showing the severity of the subject's noncompliance over the last few weeks of the year. This teacher and teacher's aide had attempted to use a form of compliance training in which the subject was required to stand up and sit down on command. The data represent the number of minutes the subject resisted and fought the classroom staff before he would stand up and sit down eight consecutive times. The decision was made that the subject could not function in a public school setting.

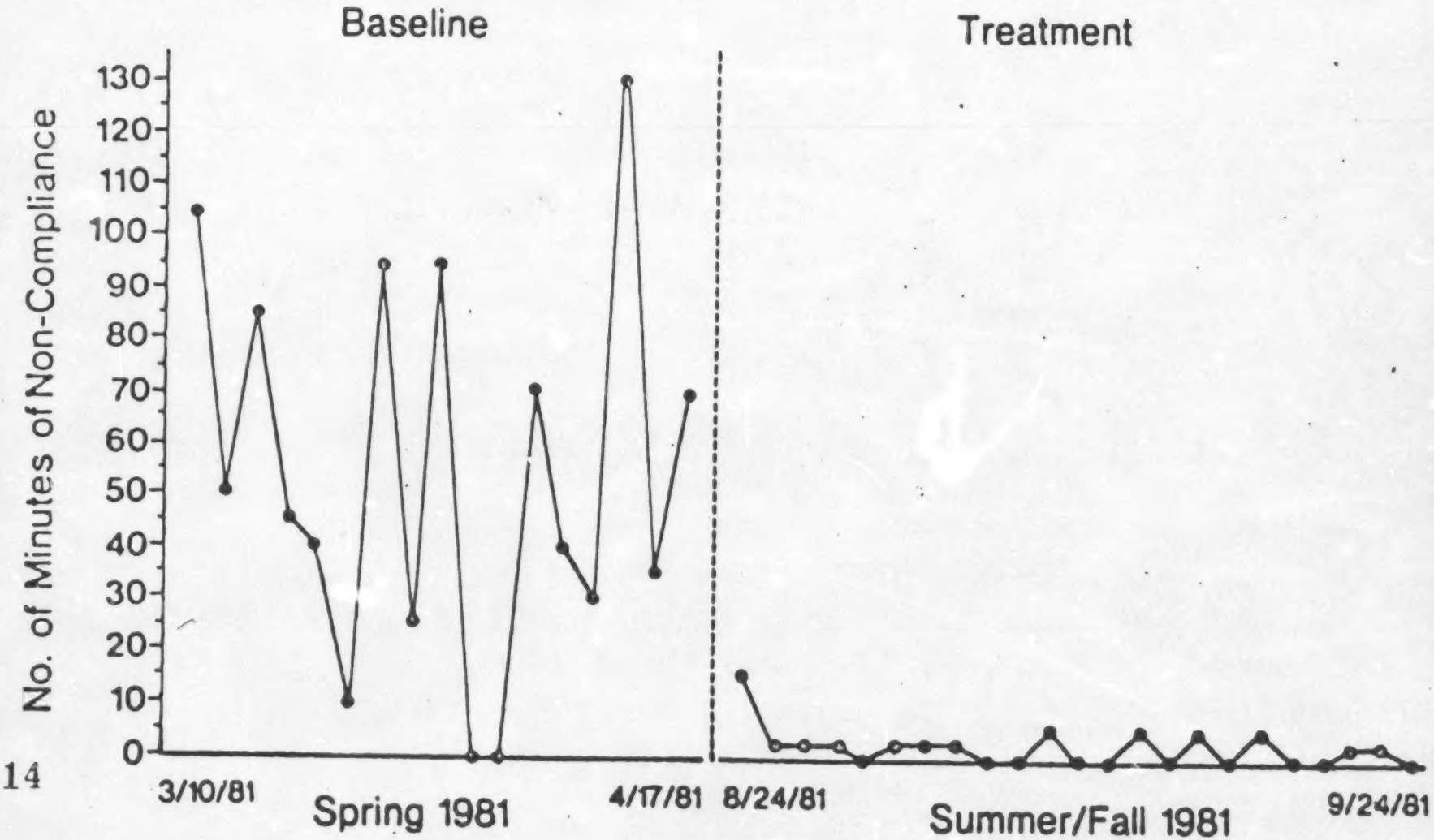
The subject was eventually placed in our charge for extensive compliance training. This training commenced four months after the baseline data was presented at the meeting. The data (taken beginning August 14, 1981) show the dramatic reduction in noncompliance. The problem in the previous program was that the subject was punished for noncompliance but not reinforced for compliance in any comparable way. That is, the noncompliance set was in operation, but the compliance set was never effectively established with him. Once he learned that compliance is reinforced, the incidence of noncompliance decreased very significantly, as indicated by the data.

Case Study 4

This learner is a 13-year-old nonverbal male whose primary diagnosis is childhood autism. He has attended classes for developmentally delayed students based in public schools for the past six years. He has exhibited violent and bizarre, ritualistic behavior throughout his schooling. His repertoire of inappropriate behavior included non-compliance, hitting others, soiling, hysterical fits of laughter, chronic masturbation, throwing objects, and stereotyped hand movements. Several behavior programs had been implemented both at home and at school, with only marginal and short-lived results. At the time generalized compliance training was implemented, teachers were most concerned about his aggression (particularly punching the teacher in the face). At home the parents were concerned with night time soiling.

The hitting behavior occurred an average of 15 hits per day in the classroom during the 1980-81 school year. The graph presents two weeks of baseline data for 1981-82, showing an average of 7 hits per day. Note that this figure is quite conservative since teachers would try to prevent occurrences of hitting by not presenting this learner with high-demand situations that would prompt aggression. After the generalized compliance training was implemented, a slight downward trend can be seen in the data (phase B). Note that the learner was placed in a very high-demand situation with some 500

Case study 3



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opportunities per day to hit. The data show a very sharp increase the first day of phase B, that is, the first day that the initial trainer was absent. On subsequent days, the downward trend continued with zero hits per day occurring over the next three months.

Once the compliance training had been established at school, the program was implemented in the home. The parents reported that night time soiling had been occurring about twice per week. After the program was introduced, soiling incidents averaged one per two weeks for the first month, and one incident was reported in the last six weeks. The other inappropriate behaviors have diminished and are easily controlled when they occur.

MAINTENANCE

The four case studies, mentioned earlier, demonstrate that significant behavior change occurred relatively quickly. However, an equally important issue, is the durability or maintenance of the behavior change. We assert that maintenance is not something that "may happen" nor is it a something that results as a "program offshoot." Rather, maintenance is a function of careful programming. Procedural steps must be included in a program to insure that behavioral change is maintained.

1. The program must be designed to present teaching examples that sample the range of all environmental conditions the learner will encounter (e.g., all people, all settings, and all times in which appropriate behavior is expected).

2. The program must provide the learner with the opportunity to practice behaving appropriately on a) very frequent basis and, then b) an intermittent basis.

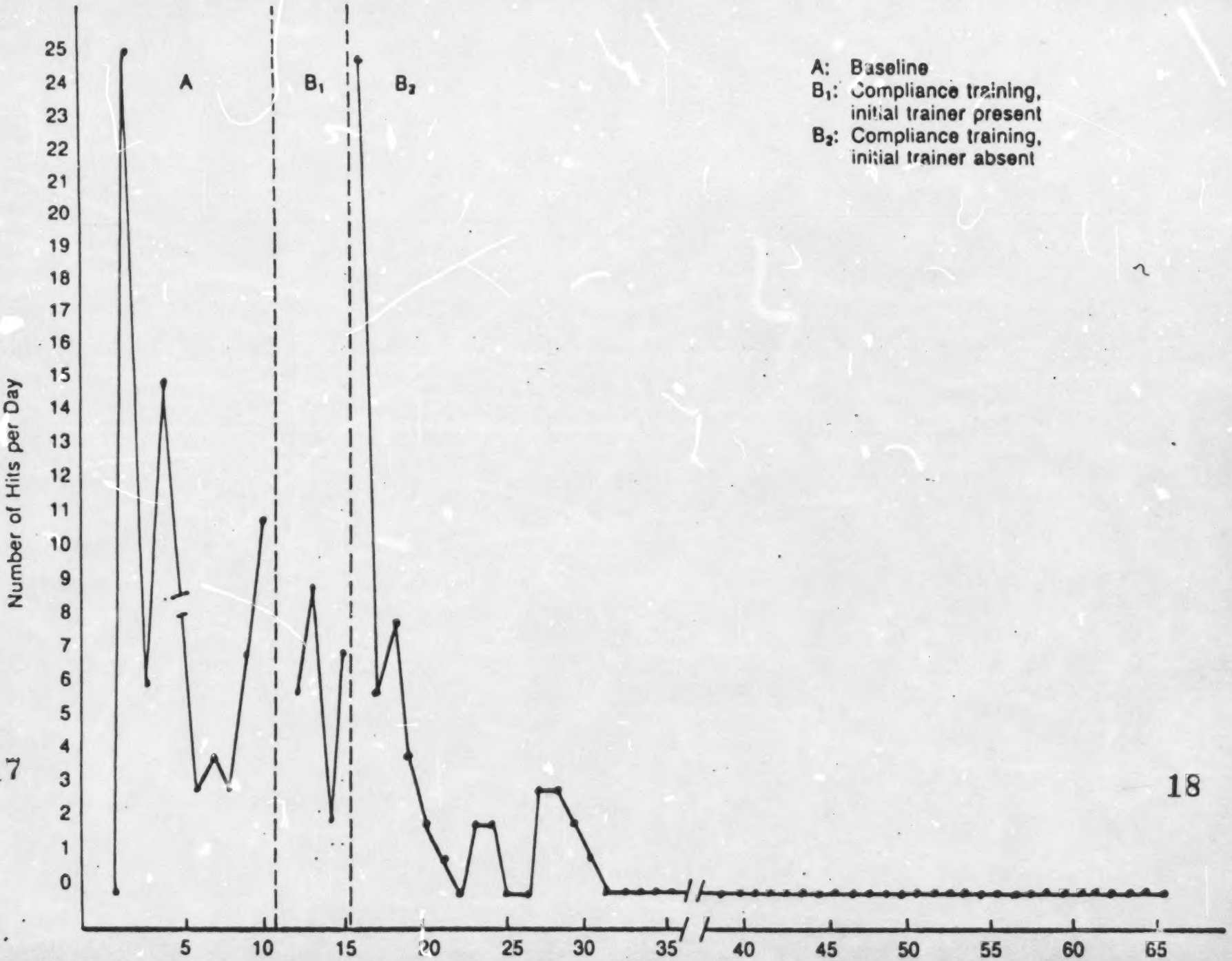
3. The program must assure that appropriate responses will be reinforced at an appropriate level, and on an appropriate schedule, in settings in which the learner is expected to perform.

4. The program must be designed to allow learners to become less able to discriminate when they are in a training versus a non-training situation.

5. The program should be designed so that reinforcement for appropriate behavior will be provided by the natural environment.

Given the severity of the inappropriate behaviors displayed by students for whom Generalized Compliance Training is appropriate, it can also be expected that a maintenance program may need to be in effect for years to come.

Case study [illegible]



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The following case studies show maintenance data.

Case Study 5

The learner was a twenty-year-old severely mentally retarded female with autistic behavior patterns. She had attended public school programs for approximately eight years. Throughout her education, there had been reports of oppositional behavior and extreme verbal outbursts. Verbal outbursts consisted of screaming, loud crying, and loud repetitions of nonsense utterances. In addition, she would run up to strangers, scream and grab at their faces without warning.

During the two years prior to the implementation of Generalized Compliance Training, various behavior management strategies had been implemented with little success. The graph illustrates the mean daily verbal outbursts per week in the public shool setting. At the beginning of the 1981-82 school year, an extinction procedure was implemented. During this phase, verbal outbursts occurred at a mean rate of 174 per day. In January, one component of the Generalized Compliance Training Program was experimentally introduced - the compliance set. Verbal outbursts during this phase averaged 103 per day.

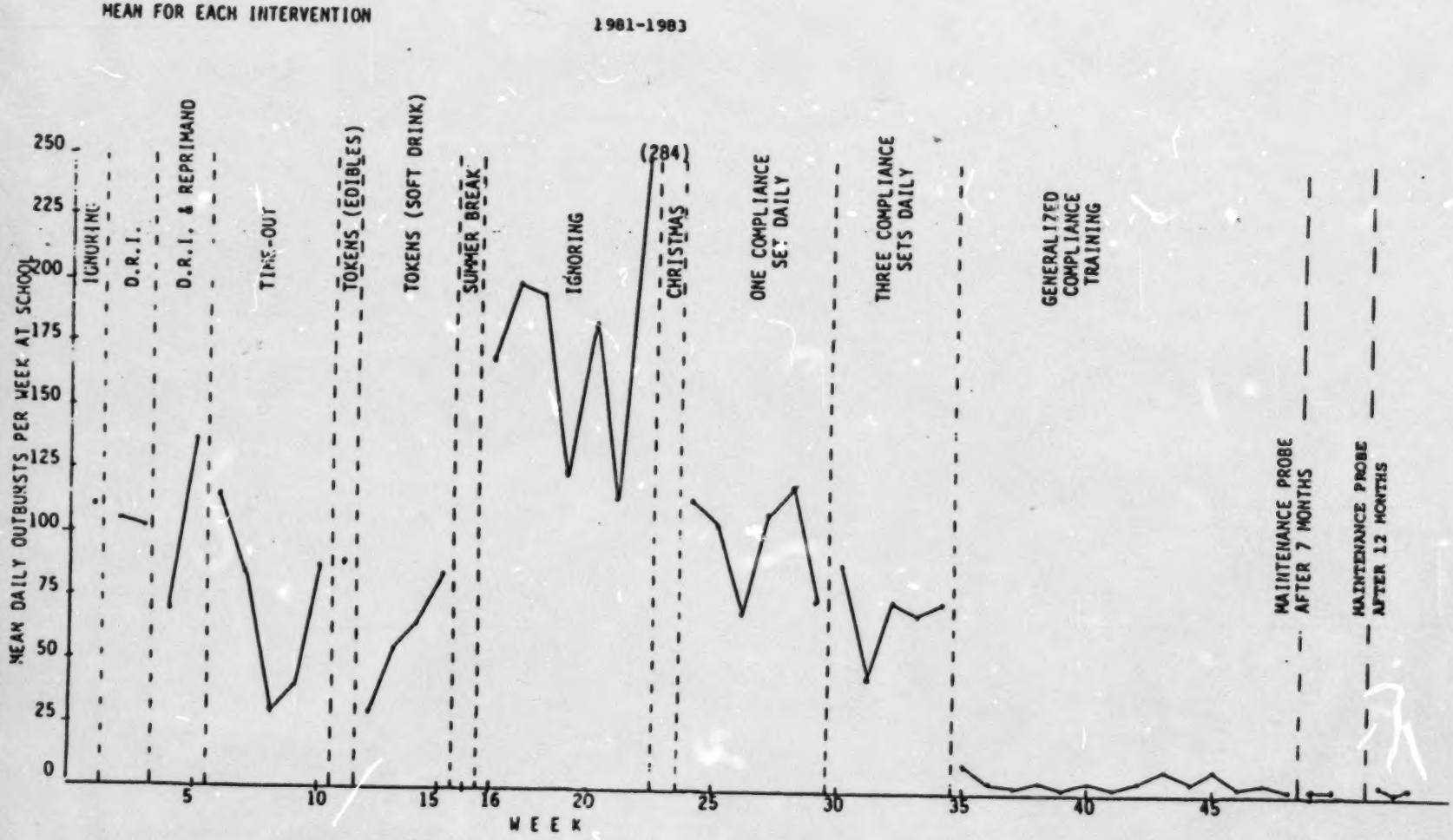
Seven weeks later, compliance instruction was increased to three compliance sets each day. During this phase, verbal outbursts averaged 64 per day.

In March, the Generalized Compliance Training Program was fully implemented. The noncompliance set was used to consequate noncompliance. The compliance set was expanded, and behaviors incompatible with verbal outbursts were taught. With the introduction of the complete program, verbal outbursts dropped to three per day and remained at that level for the remainder of the school year. During school year 1982-83, verbal outbursts occurred at an average of less than one per day.

Case Study 6

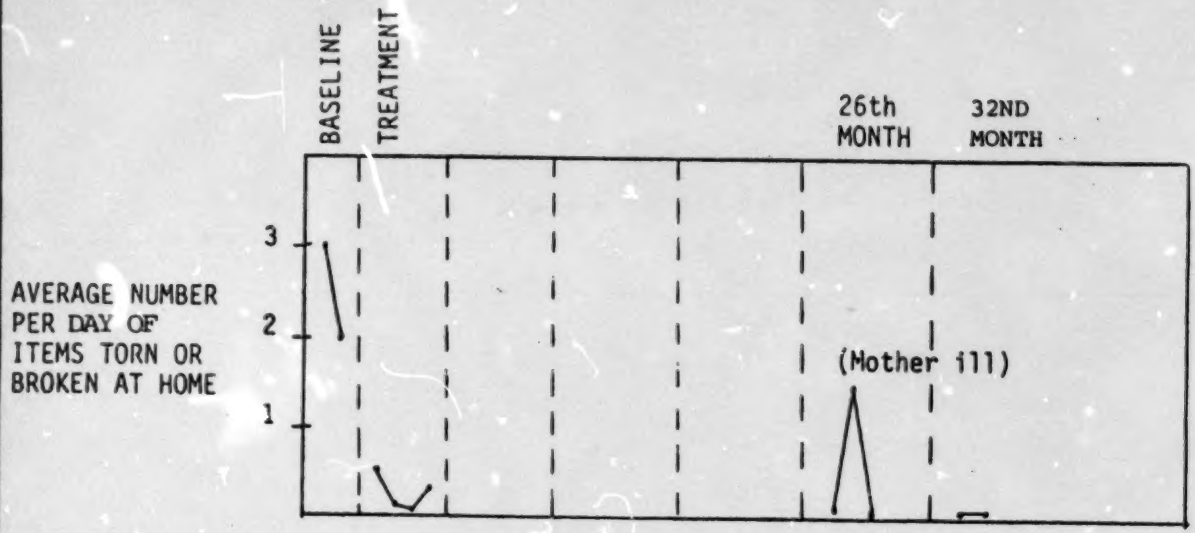
This student has already been described (Case Study 2). The data in the figure for Case Study 6 show the mean daily occurrence of breaking or tearing behavior at home and school. During the baseline period, the mean number of items damaged per day was 5.1 (2.8 at home and 2.3 at school). This number decreased to virtually zero at each site after compliance training was introduced. In addition, the frequency of breaking and tearing behavior has been maintained at near-zero levels for over three years. The only reported regression occurred when the learner's parent was ill and could not carry out the maintenance program.

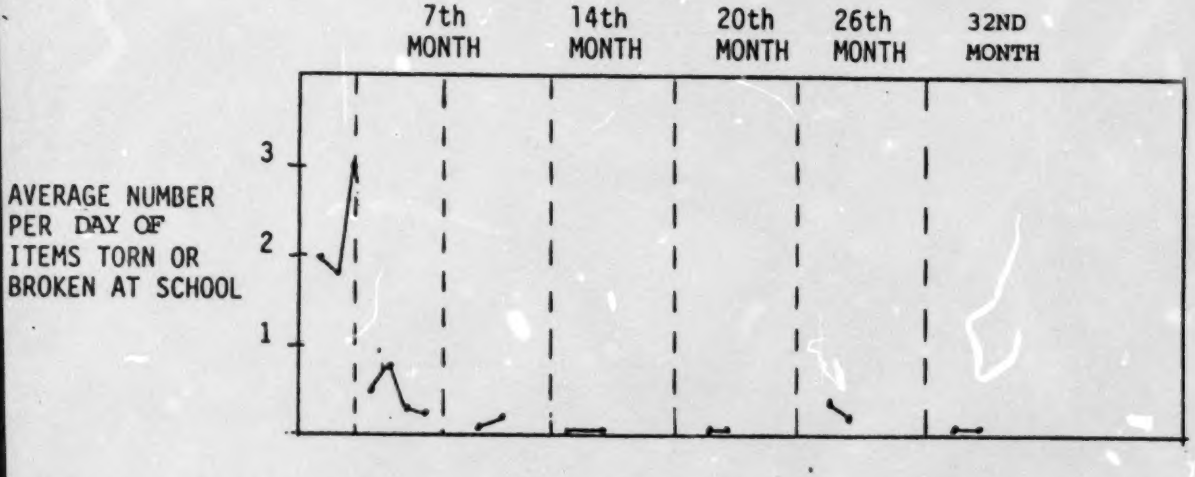
CASE STUDY 5



Mean daily verbal outbursts per week at school.

CASE STUDY 6





Mean daily occurrence of breaking or tearing behavior at home and school.

CONCLUSION

Generalized Compliance Training is a precise technology that has been designed to remediate severe behavior problems. The procedures incorporate both direct instruction principles and behavior principles. The program has been dramatically effective in controlling a broad range of persistent inappropriate behavior across all age groups and in settings that include public schools, homes, residential facilities, pre-schools and private facilities. The procedures are precise and must be closely followed if they are to work. We therefore recommend that only personnel trained in these procedures implement the program. A skilled teacher could implement the program if consultation were readily available from a trained person.

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